

APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

125, AVENUE DE WAGRAM, PARIS

Distinguished friends!

We cannot let pass the occasion to alert the International League of Human Rights to the events that led to the murder of a Croatian scholar Dr Milan Sufflay on February 18 [1931].

As the scholar was going home on that day, he was, on a street in Zagreb, attacked from behind and, according to the reports we have received, murdered with an iron rod. The next day he succumbed to the heavy injuries and died. He was buried at Zagreb's Mirogoj Cemetery on February 22, next to the other Croatian martyrs.

Professor Milan Sufflay was renowned for his numerous research articles and activities. Zagreb's newspapers, however, were not allowed to report on the activities of this scholar. The obituary notice was confiscated and condolence telegrams were not allowed to be sent. It was not allowed to announce the time of the funeral, and the hanging of a flag of mourning on the university building was forbidden.

The students that attended the funeral were banished from Zagreb by police authorities and the Croatian national tricolours that decorated the wreaths were removed.

The name of the murderer, Branko Zwerger, was known. The organisation that he was a member of was also known ("Young Yugoslavia"). It was known that the murder was arranged on the night between February 11 and 12, in the flat belonging to the commander of the city, General Belimarkovic. Brkic, Godler, Marcec and the murderer Zwerger were the members of the "Young Yugoslavia" organisation that took part in the assassination. Despite that, the Zagreb police announced on February 19 that the murderer was unknown.

The following facts preceded the murder of professor Sufflay:

1. On the occasion of the visit of the King of Serbia to Zagreb in January, a number of the most renowned personalities - Croatian leader Dr Vlatko Macek, Dr Ante Trumbic, Dr Mile Budak, university professors Dr Filip Lukas, Dr David Karlovic, Dr Milan Sufflay and others - were sent threatening letters signed "For the King and the Homeland," according to which their lives and the lives of their families would be the price if there were any protests or demonstrations during the King's visit to Zagreb.
2. King Alexander held a public speech to the terrorist organisation bearing the name "Young Yugoslavia," in which he spoke about removing Croatian representatives elected by the people, which he had carried out. He said: "I have removed the representatives." He himself gave the initiative, that is the order, for his formal removal from the parliament, to be transformed into a physical, that is lasting, removal. June 20, 1928, when the Croatian leaders were murdered in the Belgrade parliament, should be used as a guideline.
3. Following that the government's press appealed to the public to murder the leaders of the Croatian people. Thus it was written in the government newspaper "Nasa sloga" (Our Unity) in Sušak on February 18: "The heads will be smashed."
4. On the same night, Professor Sufflay was murdered in Zagreb. The second example of an open invitation to murder was published on February 28 in the Split journal "Zastava" (The Flag), while further invitations were published in the Maribor journal "Jugoslaven" (The Yugoslav). Some members of "Young Yugoslavia", who had the task of carrying out the murders of Croats in foreign countries, were on March 12 in Vienna caught while carrying out preparations for the murders, and were handed to the courts in Vienna for judicial proceedings.

A delegation of Croatian national representatives handed the League of Nations in Geneva a Memorandum, dated January 25, 1930, which was also sent to governments and organisations of all cultural states, warning them about the situation in Croatia. The Memorandum was an accusation before the entire world against the absolutist rule of the King of Serbia and against the terror and horror of the rule against the Croatian people. As facts have proven, the horrors since that time have only become worse. With consideration to this alarming state of affairs, we ask of you, the International League of Human Rights, to take all the necessary measures to put a stop to this endless and violent tyranny.

Murder as a source for achieving political goals must not be tolerated.

Glorifying murderers as national heroes must not be tolerated.

We feel that it is the duty of the International League of Human Rights to appeal to all those that respect freedom and the human rights of nations, to oppose the tyranny that rules in Croatia and to start the most dignified protest. All countries, especially France, Germany, Poland, Austria, places where the International League of Human Rights exists, have the responsibility of acting as a shield for this small, peaceful, and enlightened nation.

We await your decision and send you kind regards.

German League of Human Rights

Albert Einstein

Heinrich Mann

April 1931, Berlin.